The dutifull

ADVICE

of a loving

SONNE

To his aged

FATHER.

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THE DVTIFULL ADVICE OF A LOVING SONNE TO HIS AGED FATHER.

SIR,

I Humbly beseech you, both in respect of the honour

of God, your dutie to his Church, and the comfort of your owne ſoule, that you ſeriouſly conſider in what tearmes you ſtand; and weigh your ſelfe in a Chriſtian Ballance, taking for your counterpoiſe the Iudgements of God: Take heede in time that the word *Tekell*, writ-

written of old against *Balthazar*, and interpreted by *Daniel*, be not verified in you, whose exposition was, You have beene poyſed in the ſcale, and found of too light weight. *Dan.* 3.

Remember that you are now in the weining, and the date of your pilgrimage well-nigh ex-

pired, and now that
it behoveth you to
looke towards your
Countrey, your for-
eeslanguisheth, your
fences impaire, your
body droops, and on
every side the rui-
nous Cottage of
your faint and feeble
flesh threatneth a
fall. And having so
many harbingers of
death to premonish
you

you of your end, how can you but prepare for ſo dreadfull a ſtranger. The young man may dye quickly, but the old cannot live long: the young mans life by caſualty may bee abridged, but the old mans by no Phyſick can bee long adjourned, and therefore if greene yeeres ſhould

ſometimes thinke of the grave, the thoughts of old age ſhould continually dwell in the ſame.

The prerogative of Infancie is innocencie; of Childehood, reverence; of Man-hood, maturirity; and of old age, wiſedome.

And ſeeing then that the chiefeſt proper-

perties of wisedome are to be mindefull of things past, carefull for things present, and provident for things to come; Vse you now the privilege of natures tallent to the benefit of your owne soule, and procure hereafter to be wise in weldoing, and watchfull in the foresight of

of future harmes. To ſerve the world you are now unable, and though you were able, yet you have little cauſe to bee willing, ſeeing that it never gave you but an unhappy welcome, a hurtfull entertainment, and now doth abandon you with an unfortunate farewell.

You

You have long ſowed in a field of flint, which could bring you nothing forth but a crop of cares, and afflictions of ſpirit, rewarding your labors with remorſe, and affording for your gaine, eternall danger.

It is now more than a ſeaſonable time to alter the courſe

course of so unthriving a husbandry, and to enter into the field of Gods church in which, sowing the seed of repentant sorrow, and watering them with the tears of humble contritiõ, you may hereafter reape a more beneficiall harvest, and gather the fruits of everlasting cõfort

Re-

Remember, I pray you, that your ſpring is ſpent, your ſummer overpaſt, you are now arrived at the fall of the leafe; yea, and winter colors have long ſince ſtained your hoarie head.

Bee not careleſſe, (ſaith Saint *Auguſtin*) though our loving Lord bear long with offen-

offenders; for the longer he ſtayes, not finding amẽdment, the ſoarer hee will ſcourge When hee comes to Iudgement: And his patience in ſo long forbearing, is ouely to lend us reſpit to repent, and not any wiſe to inlarge us leiſure to ſinne.

Hee that is toſſed with

with varietie of ſtormes, and cannot come to his deſired port, maketh not much way, but is much turmoyled; ſo, hee that hath paſſed many yeeres, and purchaſed little profit, hath had a long being, but a ſhort life; For, life is more to bee meaſured by wel-doing, than by num-

number of yeeres
Seeing that mo
men by many day
doe but procure m
ny deaths, & othe
in ſhort ſpace atta
to the life of infini
ages; what is t
body without t
ſoule, but a corru
carkaſſe? And wh
is the ſoule withou
God, but a ſepulch
of ſinne?

If God bee the way, the life, and the truth; he that goeth without him, strayeth; and he that liveth without him, dyeth; and he that is not taught by him, erreth.

Well (saith *Saint Augustine*) God is our true, & chiefest life, from whom to revolt, is to fall; to

whom to returne, i
to riſe, and in whom
to ſtay, is to ſtand
ſure.

God is hee from
whom to depart is
to dye; to whom to
repaire, is to revive;
and in whom to
dwel, is life for ever.
Bee not then of the
number of thoſe
that beginne not to
live, till they bee rea-
dy

dy to dye: and then,
after a foes desert,
come to crave of
God a friends enter-
tainment.

Some there be
that thinke to snatch
heaven in a mo-
ment, which the best
can scarce attaine
unto in the mainte-
nãce of many yeares,
and when they have
glutted themselves

with worldly de-
lights, would jump
from *Dives* dyet, to
Lazarus Crowne
from the service of
Satan, to the solace
of a Saint.

But beeyou well
assured, that God is
not so penurious of
friends, as to hold
himselfe and his
kingdome saleable
for the refuse and
re-

reversions of their lives, who have sacrificed the principall thereof to his enemies, and their owne brutish lust; then onely ceasing to offend, when the abilitie of offending is taken from them.

True it is, that a thiefe may be saved upon the crosse, and mercie found at the

last gaspe: But well
(saith Saint *Augustin*)
though it bee possi-
ble, yet it is scarce
credible, that the
death should finde
favour, whose whole
life deserved death,
and that the repen-
tance should bee ex-
cepted, that more
for feare of hell, and
love of himself, then
for the love of God
and

and loathſomneſſe of ſinne cryeth for mercie.

Wherefore, good Sir, make no longer delayes; but being ſo neer the breaking up of your mortall houſe, take time before extremitie, to pacifie Gods anger.

Though you ſuffered the bud to bee blaſted, though you

permitted the fruits to bee perished, and the leaves to dry up, yea, though you let the boughs to wither, and the bodie of your tree to grow to decay; yet (alas) keep life in the root, for feare left the whole tree become fewell for hell fire; For surely where the tree falleth, there it shall

ſhall lye, whether towards the South, or to the North, to heaven, or to hell; and ſuch ſap as it bringeth forth, ſuch fruite ſhall it ever beare.

Death hath already filed from you the better part of your naturall forces, and left you now to the Lees and remiſ-

ſals

ſals of your weary-iſh and dying dayes.

The remainder wherof as it cannot bee long, ſo doth it warne you ſpeedily to ranſom your former loſſes; for what is age, but the Calends of death, and what importeth your preſent weakeneſſe, but a nearneſt of your approching diſſo-

dissolution, you are now imbarked in your finall voyage, and not farre from the stint and period of your course.

Bee not therefore unprovided of such appurtenances as are behoovefull in so perplexed and perilous a journy; death it selfe is very feare-full, but much more ter-

terrible in respect of the judgment it summoneth us unto.

If you were now laid upon your departing bed, burthened with the heavie load of your former trespasses, and gored with the sting and pricke of a festered Conscience; if yee felt the crampe of death

death wresting your heart-strings, and ready to make the rufull divorce betweene bodie and soule: If you lay panting for breath, and swimming in a cold and pale sweat wearied with struggling against your deadly pangs, O what would you give for an houres re-

repentance; at what
rate would you va-
lue a dayes contriti-
on: Then worlds
would bee worth
leſſe in reſpect of a
little reſpite, a ſhort
truce would ſeeme
more precious than
the treaſures of an
Empire, nothing
would bee ſo much
eſteemed as a ſhort
trice of time, which
now

now by dayes, and moneths; and years, is moſt laviſhlymiſſpent.

Oh how deepely would it wound your woefull heart, when looking back into your former life, you conſidered many hainous, and horrible offencescō mitted, many pious workes, and godly deeds

deeds omitted, and
neither of both re-
pented, your ſervice
to God promiſed,
and not performed.

Oh how uncon-
ſolably were your
caſe, your friends
being fled, your ſen-
ſes affrighted, your
thoughts amazed,
your memory de-
cayed, and your
whole mind aſtar
and

and no part able to performe what it should; but onely your guilty Conscience pestered with sinne, that would continually upbraid you with many bitter accusations.

Oh what would you thinke then, being stripped out of this mortall weede, and turned out both

of service, and house-
room of this wicked
world, you are for-
ced to enter into un-
couth and strange
pathes, and with
unknowne and ug-
ly companie to bee
convented before a
most severe Iudge,
carrying in your
conscience your in-
ditement, written
in a perfect Register

of all your misdeeds, when you shall see him prepared to give sentence upon you, against whom you have so often transgressed, and the same to be your Vmpire, whom by so manie offences you have made your enemies, when not only the Divell, but even the Angels

would plead against you, and your owne selfe, in despight of your selfe, be your owne most sharpe appeacher.

Oh what would you doe in these dreadfull exigents, when you saw the gastly Dragon, and huge gulph of hell, breaking out with most fearfull flames,

when

when you heard the weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth; the rage of those hellish monsters, the horrour of the place, the terrour of the company, and the eternitie of all those torments. Would you then thinke them wise that should delay in so weightie matters,

and idlely play away
the time allotted, to
prevent these intol-
lerable calamities?
Would you thē coū
it secure to nurse in
your bosomes se
many Serpents as
sinnes? and to foste
in your souls so ma-
nie malicious accu-
sors, as mortall and
horrible offences?
Would you not
think

thinke one life too little to repent in, for ſo many, and ſo great iniquities, every one whereof were enough to throw you into theſe unſpeakeable and intolerable torments.

And why then, (alas) doe you not at the leaſt devote that ſmall remnant, and ſurpluſſage of theſe

your latter dayes, procuring to make an attonement with God, and to free your Soule and conscience from that corruption which by your fall hath crept into it.

Those verie eyes that behold, and reade this discourse, those very eares that are attentive to heare it,

it, and that very understanding that cõsidereth and conceiveth it, shall be cited as certaine witnesses of these rehearsed things. In your owne body shall you experience these deadly Agonies, and in your soule shall you feelingly finde these terrible feares; yea, and your pre-

sent

ſent eſtate, is in danger of the deepeſt harmes, if you doe not the ſooner recover your ſelfe into that fold and family of Gods faithfull ſervants.

What have you gotten by being ſo long a cuſtomer to the world, but falſe ware ſutable to the ſhop of ſuch a merchant

chant, whose traffique is toyle, whose wealth is trash, and whose gaine is miserie: what interest have you reaped, that might equall your detriment in grace and vertue? or what could you find in the vale of teares, that was answerable to the favour of God, with losse where

whereof, you were contented to buy it.

You cannot now bee inveigled with the passiõs of youth, which making a partialitie of things, sets no distance between counterfeit and currant, for these are now worne out of force, by tract of time are fallen into re-

reproofe by triall of their folly.

Oh let not the crazy cowardneſſe of fleſh and bloud daunt the proweſſe of an intelligent perſon, who by his wiſedome cannot but diſcerne how much more cauſe there is, and how much more needefull it is to ſerve God then

then this wicked world.

But if it bee the ungrounded presumption of the mercie of GOD, and the hope of his assistance at the last plunge (which indeede is the ordinarie lure of the divell) to reclaime sinners from the pursuite of Repentance. Alas, that

that is too palpable a colluſion to miſlead a ſound and ſerviceable man, howſoever it may prevaile with ſicke and ill affected judgements: who would relye upon eternall affaires upon the gliding ſlipperineſſe, and running ſtreams of our uncertaine life? who, but one of diſtem-

of distempered wits, would offer fraud to the discipherer of all thoughts; with whom dissemble we may to our cost, but to deceive him is impossible.

Shall we esteeme it cunning to robbe the time from him, and bestow it on his enemies, who keepeth tale of the least minutes

minutes, and will examine in the end how every moment hath beene imployed. It is a prepostterous kinde of pollicy in any wise conceit to fight against God, till our weaponsbe blunted, our forces consumed, our limbs impotent, and our best time spent; & then when

we fal for faintnesse,
and have fought our
selves almost dead
to presume on his
mercy.
Ohh no, no, the
wounds of his most
sacred body so often
rubbed, and renew-
ed by our sinnes, and
every part and par-
cell of our bodies so
divers, and sundrie
wayes abused, will
bee

bee then as so many whetstones & incentives to edge & exasperate his most just revenge against us.

It is a strange peece of Art, and a verie exorbitant course, when the shippe is sound, the Pylot wall, the Mariners strong, the gale favourable, & the Sea calme to lye idlely

at the road, burning
so seasonable wea-
ther; And when the
Ship leaketh, the Pi-
lott sicke, the marri-
ners faint, the storms
boysterous, and the
Seas a turmoyle of
outragious surges,
then to launch forth
(hoise up saile) and
set out for a long
voyage into a farre
Countrey.

Yet

Yet ſuch is the skil of theſe evening Repenters, who though in the ſoūdneſſe of their health, and perfect uſe of their reaſon; they cannot reſolve to cut the Cables, & weigh the Anchor that with-holds thē from God.

Nevertheles, they feed themſelves with

a ſtrong perſwaſion that when they are aſtonied, their wits diſtracted, the underſtanding dusked, and the bodies and ſoules wracked, and tormented with the throbs, and gripes of a mortall ſickneſſe; then forſooth they will begin to thinke of their weightieſt matters, and become

ſudden

ſudden Saints, when they are ſcarce able to behave themſelves like reaſonable creatures.

No, no, if neither the Cannon, Civill, nor the Common Law will allow that man (periſhed in judgement) ſhould make any teſtament of his temporal ſub-

ſtance, How can hee that is animated with inward garboyles of an unſetled Conſcience, diſtrained with the ringing fits of his dying fleſh, mained in all his ability, and circled in on every ſide with many and ſtrange incumbrances bee thought of due diſcretion to diſpoſe

ſpoſe of his chiefeſt Iewell, which is his Soule, and to diſpatch the whole mannage of all eternity, and of the treaſures of heaven in ſo ſhort a ſpurt.

No, no, they that will loyter in ſeede-time, and begin to ſow when others reape; they that will ryot out their health, and

and beginne to cast their accounts when they are scarce able to speake. They that will slumber out the day, and enter their journey when the light doth faile them, let them blame their owne folly if they dye in debt and be eternall beggers, and fall headlong into the lap

lap of endleſſe perdition.

Let ſuch liſten to Saint *Cyprians* leſſon; Let, ſaith he, the grievouſneſſe of our ſore be the meaſure of our ſorrow; let a deepe wound have a deepe and diligent cure; *Let no mans contrition be leſſe then his crime.*

FINIS.

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